

The Declaration of Independence - Ben's Guide

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Title/Role: *Library Media Specialist/English Teacher-Retired*

Organization/School Name: *Chicago Public Schools*

Location: *Illinois*

Grade Level: *10, 11*

Type of Lesson: *Lessons in a Unit-The Declaration of Independence*

Type of Schedule: *Combination*

Collaboration Continuum: *Moderate*

Content Area: *Language Arts; Social Studies*

Content Topic: *The Writing and the Signing of the Declaration of Independence*

Standards for the 21st-Century Learner

Skill Indicator (s)

- 1.1.1 Follow an inquiry based process in seeking knowledge in curricular subjects and make the real world connection for using this process in own life.
- 2.1.2 Organize knowledge so that it is useful.
- 2.1.6 Use the writing process, media and visual literacy, and technology skills to create products that express new understandings.
- 3.1.3 Use writing and speaking skills to communicate new understandings effectively.
- 4.1.6 Organize personal knowledge in a way that can be called upon easily.

Disposition Indicators:

- 2.2.4 Demonstrate personal productivity by completing products to express learning.
- 3.3.4 Create products that apply to authentic, real-world contexts.

Responsibilities Indicators (s)

- 2.1.2 Organize knowledge so that it is useful.
- 2.1.6 Use the writing process, media and visual literacy, and technology skills to create products that express new understandings.

Self-Assessment Strategies Indicator(s)

- 3.1.4 Use technology and other information tools to organize and display knowledge and understanding in ways that others can view, use, and assess.
- 4.1.6 Organize personal knowledge in a way that can be called upon easily.

Scenario: In two to three library class sessions, the students will be exploring the Declaration of Independence as they learn to use the new *Ben's Guide* website. The unit will be taught in collaboration with the social studies teacher as the students focus on the Historical Documents section of the website. Students will be broken into groups to present from six different aspects of the document's creation and signing. They will need time to create their presentation materials and a strategy for delivery to the entire class.

Overview: The librarian will introduce the Declaration of Independence and inform students of its importance as the thirteen colonies broke away from Britain's rule. She/he will show two or three primary sources from the Library of Congress' website such as the actual document and the men in session. The projects will be explained so that students understand what is expected of them as they share the gathered information in a creative and informative fashion.

<http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/DeclarInd.html> (Actual document)

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/lessons/declaration/preparation.html> (Men in collaboration)

Final Product(s): Students will create presentation materials that can be displayed around the library for future fact- checking and modeling.

Library Lessons: Initially, Ben's Guide will be shown on the library's Smartboard. The librarian will give them a quick journey as they head to the Historical Documents section. They will briefly go over some of the facts about the need for the Declaration of Independence. The librarian will show the six major topics to be presented and students will be broken into equal numbered groups.

Estimated Lesson Time: 120 minutes or three 40 minute sessions

Assessment

Product(s): Students will create their presentations and assign a role for each member of the group to enhance the entire class' understanding.

Process: After each group has been given ample time to create their presentation strategy, the presentations will begin in an orderly process.

Self-questioning: (Group question) *"Would someone who knew nothing about the Declaration of Independence have a greater understanding of its historic importance after hearing our presentation?"*

Instructional Plan:

Resources students will use:

- Ben's Guide
- Large Post it presentations sheets
- Markers
- Websites for further information; any reference materials deemed suitable for added information.

Interactive Resource URL:

- <http://beta.fdlp.gov/>
- <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/activities/rough-draft/> (Writing the Declaration of Independence activity)

Resources instructor will use:

Smartboard
Projector
Laptop
Whiteboard

Instruction/Activities

Direct Instruction: The librarian will provide background information to the students. She/he will help the entire class understand why America felt disgruntled with England and why they felt the need to break away and start their own local government. She/he will display the Ben's Guide website; go the Master level and then the Historical Documents section. Then, the Declaration of Independence part will be shown along with the primary sources listed above which show the actual document and the men in collaboration. She/he will explain the students' task to inform their classmates of more details through group presentations. The six categories will be displayed and the class will be broken into groups and be given a timeline for material preparation and actual presentation to the whole class. The six categories are:

- **The Colonies Grievances against England** (ex. Stamp Act, Boston Tea Party;; taxes in general)
- **The Debate over the document's content:** (John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Robert Livingston and Roger Sherman)
- **A replicated document- handwritten with strikeouts**
- **Revision of Draft** – reenactment with quibbling (Benjamin Franklin, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson)
- **Signing Gathering** – actual signing reenactment on August 2, 1776. Demonstrate John Hancock's large signature and tell why the term is now a coined phrase.
- **Recitation of famous lines** from the *Declaration of Independence* – choral reading

Modeling and guided practice: The librarian talk to students about the significance of celebrating the 4th of July and let them know that this unit will give them further insight into what was being declared and why the independence was necessary. Their reenactments will show its importance. She/he will model the expectations by sharing a presentation board from an earlier year and motivate them to go above and beyond the call of duty.

Independent practice: Students may explore a host of interactive websites that have activities on the writing and signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Sharing and reflecting: Student materials will be displayed around the library and on the bulletin board outside of the library to showcase what they have learned.

Have you taught this lesson before? No

Strategies for differentiation: Peer mentoring is highly encouraged where students can assist those who need help. Those who have completed all tasks can go to a computer station and play the Ben's Guide interactive games for deeper understanding of how government works.

AASL/Common Core State Standards

Common Core State Standards English Language Arts

CC.9-10.L.1 Conventions of Standard English: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

CC.9-10.R.I.7 Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.

CC.9-10.R.L.1 Key Ideas and Details: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CC.9-10.SL.1 Comprehension and Collaboration: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CC.9-10.SL.5 Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas: Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

Common Core Standards for Writing in History/Social Studies

CC9-10WH/SS/S/TS1a Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among the claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

CC9-10WH/SS/S/TS2a Introduce a topic and organize ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

CC11-12WH/SS/S/TS2a Introduce a topic and organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

CC11-12WH/SS/S/TS9 Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

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